Shinkawa

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https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/descendentstudios/descent-underground

A new kickstarter has gone up for which I am an artistic contributor to. I'd like to just spread the word about Descendent Studios who recent acquired the license to make a sequel to Decent from Interplay. So if you where a fan of the old series or like the idea of space mining ships fighting underground, give it a look see.

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http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/Dad-buys-Tesco-bananas-infested-spiders-bite/story-26159702-detail/story.html

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For Atoll Lab: new side character "Shinkawa" and "Mori"

So I came up with a new side character to describe the state of the world In Japan, (Much like Borislav and *Fedya describe the state of Russia in this future world of living machines).

Japan in 2124 : As you may have heard, Japan's own population of true Japanese people and those who maintain the cultural traditions are in the decline. Even though new industries pioneered over the hundred year period pulled the country out of its wildly recurring economic recession, social trends changed the face of its people forever. Kids growing up and moving away from rural farming life, the high cost of city life, the great woman's empowerment movements, the rise of the Hikikomori and the public protests against work life, did little to encourage the newer generations of humans to settle down and have kids. The population has largely been in decline ever since, with their being more robots and vehicles then there are people. With less children being born, Japan had to rely more upon its robot A.I. technology to act as caretakers for the aging populace. The hard-line policies against opening up the boarders for worker immigration also proved to be a mistake that would bite the government in the ass 75 years later. in 2094 when the vehicles of the world awoke, they outnumbered the people of Japan 3 to one, the revolution and change of government happened relatively quick with machines being accepted as "people" 10 years before the rest of the world settled on their own man-machine governments. The Japanese people consider the "Kikaijin" (Machine people) to be a positive addition to the culture because machines are seen as Blank-slates, or sponges to absorb culture. The cultures positive predisposition toward to A.I. and robots also largely helped the kikaijin to be accepted by the people on a whole. For the last 40 years Japan has enacted a "Bachelor tax" which also includes the Kikaijin our of desperation to replace the population with non foreigners. (eventually the government had to relent a little on the closed boarder thing, so you do see people from France, Germany, Mexico ect.)

"Despite our acceptance into this world, We are looked upon as fundamentally different. This may change, but our kind could wait a whole lifetime to have a human open their arms to us."

Shinkawa works for the Japanese maritime self defense force. He carries the signature red sun roundel, and uses his body type to do the work he was always meant to do. As a US-2 ShinMeiwa Amphibious STOL search and rescue craft, His life put him on the outskirts of the popular places far from Tokyo and Akihabara to the southern Iwakuni Airbase where a small but aging population of river folk settled down amongst the military personal. The military here ran a tight ship to keep the shores safe from all sorts of things as well as unscrupulous "western terrorists" who would disrupt the tenants of the man-machine alliance. Shinkawa, A proper, deep voiced Japanese "citizen" moored himself by a private relaxing while being on call for rescue operations. The Job was dangerous but payed very well considering that he had not taken up with a human partner- he had pocketed all the money and lived modestly..but lonely.

He had thought many times of taking up with another machine as His own desires ebbed and flowed. Mating with a Human or a Morph was the best possible outcome a Kikaijin could hope for, but being on call, his line of work didn't leave for much time for him to travel. It came down to that fateful day when a High school student played hookey and found him floating along the docks next to some other living machines. The girl, "Mori" was a budding Maritime enthusiast and stopped just short of the base to come talk to a real 'search and rescue plane". She was bright and earnest, which pleased Shinkawa greatly, the 2 talked about his line of work and about his boat friends, procedures, and his own personal stories. The girl was young, Probably 16-17 Shinkawa could sense, but her heart beat was elevated and he could feel she was really on about something else. After about 3 hours of heated conversation She asked him to come close, and she whispered to him silently (This doesn't matter as all Dire machines have stellar hearing), "Shinkawa, I… I want to know what it's like to have sex with Kikaijin. Will you?"

In Japan, No one expects women to be this forward. Even after the woman's empowerment movement, it is frowned upon for young women to be this forward to men.

Shinkawa choked and his expression turned from terror to utter intrigue. He grit his tungsten teeth, his internal nature- the 2nd protocol sent his core into full spin. There was no way he could deny this long-haired girl her request. He spirited her away to a nice dark, quiet area, where the 2 worked slowly and softly to take her virginity in the least painful way. He warmed his hull for her, and his tendrils coiled around and seized her thighs to open and press splayed out against him. she kissed and licked his tendrils, but stopped and panted "Please I need this, Please..Don't think..any..less of me.." he moaned back to her "I don't, I don't." and he undid her hair ties to let her hair free to flow in long black waves which he played with excitedly. This was like a dream for him, a human coming to him for intimacy, one of his tendrils snaked its way over the thick thatch of black hair over her mound to her moist folds where he rubbed a soft sucking tip in a circular motion over her bundle of nerves. He was capable of delivering very low grade electrical charge and used this in an attempt to coax an orgasm from her shy clit. With him buried hotly-tightly inside her, the waves of pleasure came more easily. The 2 worked into their sex gently, enjoying every moment. This girl was not shy, but she was worried about what her family would think if she tried dating the Kikaijin around them.

Shinkawa would later find out with each subsequent visit that Mori was an A student, and had prospects to get into a good college, But this was what her mother wanted. She had no father, he skipped out when he got her mom pregnant. Because of this, her life was practically run by her mother who didn't want the same thing that happened to her happen to her daughter. Mori preferred the JSDF for a career path, but liked ships and would have settled for the maritime SDF. It was blatantly obvious this girl desired machine kind, and it was Shinkawa's duty now to make her his own. They kept their relationship secret for 3 months until the grey "corruption" began to travel up her fingers and toes. Thank god it was the fall season where she could wear long socks and gloves at the gym. The 2 effectively fell in love with each other and met regularly once, twice, 3 times a week. They discussed politics, the news, movies, games, and had sex when the two ran out of things to say. Sometimes she would come to visit and do homework while Shinkawa listened to music. Sometimes, Mori came by to sleep off a late night of studying pressed against his warm hull where he caressed her lovingly. Her school friends started to suspect something was going on when she blew off their attempts to hang out only to then call back much later in the evening to apologize. Her mother was worried the stress of school may have had something to do with it, but choose not to intervene just yet.

Mori came by one day after school to find that Shinkawa was not there. He was called in on short notice to rescue some humans caught in an over water fire fight between a living fishing boat and a dead one filled with terrorists or maybe drug runners, it was hard to tell. The whole thing happened so fast. Shinkawa and his unit showed up, the armed PT boats with their personal scrambled to neutralize the situation while Shinkawa attempted to rescue the 3 men who were cast into the sea when the living ship was rocketed by the bad guys. Shinkawa barely lifted up off the water when his right proximal engine was blasted apart by some kind of improvised missile weapon. The blast scattered ball-bearings against his hull and nacelles causing him to hard land back into the water where he quickly began bleeding in large heaps. He limped back to shore on 2 engines and completed his rescue.. but he was weak. The engines-they are the hearts of the machine.. If you destroy the engine of a Dire machine, you kill them. For special planes like Shinkawa, the loss of one engine wouldn't automatically mean death… But the further loss of another without sufficient nano machine reserves to regenerate it meant that he was dying.

Mori found Shinkawa dragging his own body heavily ashore in the frost covered ground. She screamed and ran to him pressing her hand into his stream of grey blood flowing out into the dirt and looked up in panic. He groaned and told her " Forgive me, mission went wrong … a..mission.. was attacked..I am damaged." She stumbled around looking for someone to call to, but her and him were alone. "W-What can I do? I am not a mechanic! Please don't die Shinkawa!" "He moaned weakly, "Don't bother..calling..emergency..response.. no time…" Mori listened intensely as Shinkawa spoke, "Out of Nanomachine..out of blood.. but you have.. in you.." The thought occurred to her something that he had told her would be important later, Something called "Nanomachine partitioning". All that sex she had with him was corrupting her body sure, but he was also using her body to store unspent nanomachines, something for a rainy day. A mortal injury in this case. He wasn't sure if taking them from her body would be enough, she was a small girl, but he needed to try and survive.

The process to extract these nanomachines from her would make her loose consciousness, even done so sexually, it was hard on the body. He embraced her close, dragged her to the nearest open seaplane shed , and used what was inside of her to close his wounds and save his failing engine.

A week passed. People hardly noticed the missing person's report that Mori's frantic mother had posted. But the team responsible for taking mission reports and filling injury claims eventually went looking for Shinkawa. He had not signed in to work since the incident, and the brass [illegible]ed the shoreline looking for him . The 3 men Shinkawa rescued were innocent bystanders targeted by one of the so called "western terrorist organizations" Humanist first. They started attacking living machines in the area completely oblivious to their close proximity to a

heavily populated military base. The Coast guard was forced to open fire on the opposition who refused to surrender to a man machine government country. None of the terrorists survived and Only 3 of the 7 humans aboard the fishing boat survived. The boat herself, was killed.

When Shinkawa was found, he was slumped over weakly tending to a small comatose woman in his arms, His wounds crusted up with silvery grey flakes of nanomachine matrix. The Iwakuni recovery team recognized the girl "Mori" from the missing persons reports. So while mechanics and doctors were called in to assess both of them, Mori's mother was called. The cat was now out of the bag. Mori's mother showed up, talked to the maritime authorities and met the huge beast of a seaplane that her daughter was moonlighting with for so long. Before the mother could raise a fuss, Shinkawa boldly proclaimed "I am marrying your daughter, she saved my life." Moris mother neurotically lit up a cigarette and sat down for the strange truth the wounded Kikaijin was about to tell her. Shinkawa told Mori's mother about some of the things he felt she needed to know about her own daughter emotionally. He also told her mother that Mori was a 'hopeless mechanophile" just following her nature and her desired career path. He would be marrying her daughter one way or another. (Even if the age of consent in japan is 16, Mori would be 18 in 2 years anyway and there would be nothing her mom could do to stop it.)

Mori was finally roused awake by the doctors who gave her fluids and sugar injections to shake her out of her stupor. When she woke up, she was mortified to find her mother there scowling over Mori's half naked body cigarette in hand. the mother looked up at Shinkawa (who was a veritable giant 109 foot long seaplane) and took a puff from her cigarette. Her mother spoke, " It figures this is how things would end up." :she takes another puff from her cigarette; "you seem very sincere machine, so much more so then I was given when I was her age." :Her daughter looked down to the floor but Shinkawas tendrils pulled her chin up to hear her mother speak, "This isn't what I wanted for my daughter, But I hear rescue workers make good money. You take good care of her while she continues through school , or else. " 'She is my only daughter, Take care of Mori, or I will kill you myself." ;the mother lit up another cigarette, she was happy her daughter was alive, but this was not what she was expecting. Mori's mother and friends all noticed the rapid change in her demeanor, she seemed happier now. Happy enough in a chaotic world.

Shinkawa cradled Mori close to him, "Mori, I want to know what it is like to grow old with a human. I want to know this joy." With tears in her eyes she wrapped her tiny arms around him and kissed his belly. "I do to too".

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In the epilogue of the story, Mori's mother plays a bigger role. Shes still very much a helicopter parent who wants to see her daughter treated right. The mom is invited over for dinner a lot much to Mori's shigrin, but this is very much the Japanese way of respect. Mori now lives with Shinkawa along the Iwakuni harbor, and the mom still visits a lot, she expects grand kids- even if they don't necessarily look human.

-the end for now.

Special thanks to Ken Singshow who originally introduced me to this plane after a discussion on Japanese seaplane progression from WWII and beyond. To most people, Flying Boats and amphibians are not what you'd consider 'sexy" to most people, but to me I think they are the most beautiful hybrids of the plane world. In an unrelated note, there are tons of fascinating articles about the population decline of Japanese citizens check out this one too: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbivore_men

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